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## Why linking words are important

As it has been already stated, a good structure is not enough to make your thesis effective and readable. It is equally important that **all parts are logically and coherently connected to each other**, so that even uninitiated readers can follow your ideas. Accordingly, you must use linking words and phrases to join clauses, sentences and paragraphs together. Linking words can be divided into some categories, according to the kind of idea you are trying to convey.

## Adding information

- **and**  
*We discussed training, education and the budget.*
- **in addition** (to somebody/something or as an adverb, meaning “moreover”)  
*In addition to these arrangements, extra ambulances will be on duty until midnight.  
Rent prices are very high. In addition, food is very expensive.*
- **as well as** (at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of a sentence)  
*Helen picked up her suitcase as well as her umbrella.  
As well as her umbrella, Helen picked up her suitcase.  
Helen picked up her suitcase and her umbrella as well.*
- **apart from** (+ noun)  
*Apart from their house in London, they also have a villa in Spain.*
- **Besides** (+ noun/-ing form or as an adverb, meaning “moreover”)  
*We have much in common besides our interest in music.  
Besides working as a doctor, he also writes novels in his spare time.  
I don't really want to go out. Besides, it's too late now.*
- **Also** (usually between the subject and the verb)  
*Helen also picked up her umbrella.*
- **Too** (used at the end of a sentence)  
*When I've finished painting the bathroom, I'm going to do the kitchen too.*
- **furthermore/moreover**  
*He is very good at his job. Furthermore/moreover, he is a nice guy.  
A skilled architect, he was, moreover, a very nice guy.*

## Giving examples

- **for example/for instance**  
*It is possible to combine Computer Science with other subjects, for example Physics.*
- **such as**  
*Many politicians, such as Barack Obama, attended the meeting.*
- **among them**  
*Many politicians attended the meeting. Among them, there was Barack Obama.*

## Summarising and drawing conclusions

- **in short/in brief/(to put it) in a nutshell**  
*She inherited a lot of money and a huge villa from her father. In short/in a nutshell, she's very rich.*
- **in summary/to summarise**  
*Mark had not studied very much, and his answers were confused and incomplete. In summary, his performance was very disappointing.*
- **all in all**  
*All in all, this is a car I would definitely recommend.*
- **to conclude/in conclusion**  
*In conclusion, I will never book a room in that hotel again.*

## Sequencing ideas

- **the former...the latter...**  
*He had to choose between giving up his job and giving up his principles. He chose the former.*  
*We have to make sure that the restaurant is cheap and that guests like the food. The latter point is the most important.*
- **firstly...secondly...thirdly...lastly**  
*There are many reasons why I do not want to go out tonight: firstly, I'm tired; secondly, I don't like this city; thirdly, it's raining.*
- **the following** (to start a list)  
*The following students have passed the exam: ...*
- **both...and**  
*Both my sister and my brother live in France.*
- **either...or**  
*We can either go to the cinema or stay at home.*
- **neither...nor**  
*She seemed neither tired nor upset.*

## Giving a reason

- **due to/owing to** (+ noun)  
*Due to bad weather, we had to postpone the event.*
- **due to/owing to** (+ sentence)  
*Due to the fact that the weather was bad, we had to postpone the event.*
- **because of** (+ noun)  
*Because of the bad weather, we had to postpone the event.*
- **because/since/as** (+ sentence)  
*Because/since/as the weather was bad, we had to postpone the event.*

## Giving a result

- **therefore**  
*There is still much to discuss. We shall, therefore, return to this item during our next meeting.*
- **consequently**  
*She failed her exams and was consequently unable to start her studies at college.*
- **accordingly**  
*The costs of materials rose sharply last year. Accordingly, we were forced to increase our prices.*
- **thus**  
*I moved here two weeks ago. Thus, I cannot tell you much about this city.*
- **as a result**  
*He woke up too late and, as a result, missed the train.*
- **for this reason**  
*UV radiation can seriously damage your skin. For this reason, it is essential that you always use sunscreen.*
- **so** (more informal than the other expressions mentioned above)  
*I felt very tired so I went to bed.*

## Contrasting ideas

- **but** (+ sentence)  
*I meant to come to your party last night, but I was too tired.*
- **although/even though** (+ sentence)  
*Although/ Even though I was tired, I went to the party.*
- **though**  
*She was very tired. She went to the party, though. /Though, she went to the party.*
- **despite** (+ noun/ -ing form)  
*Despite her tiredness/ despite being tired, she went to the party.*
- **in spite of** (+ noun/ -ing form)  
*In spite of her tiredness/ in spite of being tired, she went to the party.*
- **despite the fact that/in spite of the fact that** (+ sentence)  
*Despite the fact that she was tired, she went to the party.*
- **nevertheless/nonetheless/however/anyway**  
*She was very tired. Nevertheless/nonetheless/however/anyway, she went to the party.*
- **notwithstanding** (before/after the noun it refers to or as an adverb, meaning “nevertheless”)  
*Notwithstanding some minor issues, her health is quite good.*  
*The bad weather notwithstanding, lots of people attended the event.*  
*The problem is quite relevant. Notwithstanding, we'll definitely find a solution.*
- **while/whereas** (+ sentence)  
*I like the seaside, while/whereas my sister prefers the mountains.*
- **unlike** (+ noun)  
*Unlike most systems, this is very easy to install.*

## Similarity or comparison

- **similarly/likewise**  
*She was a very good student. Similarly/likewise, her brother had impressive marks in all subjects.*
- **in like fashion/in like manner**  
*He found children annoying. In like fashion, he didn't like animals.*

## Emphasis

- **above all**  
*Take your ticket with you. Above all, don't be late.*
- **indeed**  
*I was very sad indeed when I hear the bad news.*
- **truly**  
*I was truly sorry that he could not attend the meeting.*
- **of course**  
*"Are you joining us for lunch tomorrow?" "Of course I am!"*
- **certainly**  
*She was certainly a smart woman, but I didn't like her attitude.*
- **in (actual) fact** (used to emphasize a statement, especially one that is the opposite of what has just been mentioned)  
*I thought the party would be boring. In actual fact, I had a lot of fun.*
- **really**  
*I really like your dress.*
- **in truth**  
*I tried to dissimulate my sense of unease but I was, in truth, extremely embarrassed.*

## Details

- **specifically**  
*I specifically told you not to open that drawer!*
- **especially**  
*I love Rome, especially/particularly in the spring.*
- **in particular**  
*She loves reading. In particular, she is very fond of detective stories.*

## Suggestion

- **for this purpose/to this end**  
*We wanted to refurbish our house. For this purpose, we called an architect.*
- **with this in mind/with this purpose in mind/with this end in view**  
*The company wanted to expand. With this end in view, they employed 50 new staff.*

## References

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